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REMARKS

Claims 1-46 are pending in this application. Claims 1-8, 10-33 and 36-46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by Hanson. Claims 9, 34 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Hanson in view of Leon. Claims 1, 10, 20, 30, 37 and 42 are currently amended. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The presently claimed invention distinguishes Hanson because establishment of a new association between a wireless terminal device and a new access point during roaming is facilitated. Both Hanson and the claimed invention help to overcome the problem of service application disruption during roaming. However, the present invention and Hanson accomplish that objective in distinctly different ways. Hanson uses a Mobility Management Server ("MMS") to maintain a session by signaling on behalf of a terminal device while the terminal device is out of communication. For example, Hanson states in the Abstract: "a Mobility Management Server coupled to the mobile network maintains the state of each of any number of Mobile End Systems and handles the complex session management required to maintain persistent connections to the network and to other peer processes." As described in greater detail at col. 9, lines 62-67, the MMS uses the state information to maintain the connection to the peer by acknowledging receipt of data and queuing requests, i.e., functioning as a proxy for the out-of-communication Mobile End System. Hence, the saved state information of Hanson concerns the session between the peer and the mobile device, presumably at the application layer.

Rather than maintaining a session on behalf of a mobile device during hand-off like Hanson, the presently claimed invention helps solve the problem by speeding the hand-off procedure. As discussed in the specification at page 4, lines 20-30, access points require a substantial amount of state information relating to a terminal device in order to support

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connectivity. Consequently, hand-offs can take as long as 5-10 seconds while state information is built by the new access point. The present invention speeds the hand-off by providing state information relating to connectivity, i.e., below the application layer, to the new access point in order to avoid the need for re-building at least some of the state information. See, e.g., page 5, line 32 through page 6, line 4.

Claims 1, 10, 20, 30, 37 and 42 have been amended to emphasize the distinguishing features discussed above. For example, claim 1 recites "saving state information relating to the communication session connectivity between the terminal device and the second wireless access point in a back end device; communicating the saved state information from the back end device to the first wireless access point; and utilizing the saved state information, by the first wireless access point, to facilitate establishment of an association between the terminal device and the first wireless access point." Claims 10, 20, 30, 37 and 42 recite similar distinguishing language. Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 10, 20, 30, 37 and 42 is therefore requested. Claims 2-9, 11-19, 21-29, 31-36, 38-41, and 43-47 are dependent claims which further distinguish the invention, and are allowable for the reasons stated above with regard to their respective base claims. Withdrawal of the rejections of these claims, base on both Hanson and Leon, is respectfully requested.

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Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Holmes W. Anderson, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-4001 (X305) so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

  
Holmes Anderson, Reg. No. 37,272  
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)  
Steubing McGuinness & Manaras LLP  
125 Nagog Park  
Acton, MA 01720  
(978) 264-6664

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